

STORY 77

HOW ABUL HASSAN DESTROYED THE WINE
BELONGING TO THE CALIPH.

HIS PLAIN SPEAKING BEFORE THE CALIPH.

ABUL HASSAN NURI was a renowned scholar in the time of Mutazid Billah. Once he was crossing the river Tigris in a boat when his eyes fell on some earthen jars. He enquired of the boatman, what the jars contained. The boatman said, "These jars contained wine for the Caliph."

Upon this Abul Hassan took a stick and began to break the jars. His fellow passengers dreading the consequence of this seemingly rash act began to tremble and remonstrated with Abul Hassan. But he did not heed their protests and continued his work of destruction until he had smashed all the jars and spilt all the wine.

When Mutazid was informed of this incident, he ordered Abul Hassan to be arrested and brought into his presence. When the culprit came, the Caliph was sitting on the throne with a mace in his hand and his eyes glaring with wrath. As soon as he saw Abul Hassan, he said, "Who are you?" Abul Hassan said quite indifferently, "I am the censor."

The Caliph was upset but he said, "Who has made you the censor," Abu Hassan, replied "He who has made you Caliph."

Hearing this ready reply the Caliph's anger evaporated and he said nothing more.